



Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, October 23, 2016 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

Trio Sonata in G minor, TWV 42: g5

Mesto
Allegro
Andante
Vivace

GySgt Joseph Deluccio, oboe
SSgt Chaerim Smith, violin
SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello
GySgt Russell Wilson, harpsichord

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Opus 74, *Harp*

Poco adagio; Allegro
Adagio ma non troppo
Presto
Allegretto con variazioni

SSgt Karen Johnson and SSgt Chaerim Smith, violin
SSgt Sarah Hart, viola
SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello

INTERMISSION

Richard Wagner (1813–83)

Siegfried Idyll

SSgt Courtney Morton, flute
GySgt Joseph Deluccio, oboe
GySgt Joseph LeBlanc and SSgt Andrew Jacobi, clarinet
MSgt Christopher McFarlane, bassoon
GySgt Hilary Harding and SSgt Brigitte Knox, french horn
SSgt Brandon Eubank, trumpet
SSgt Karen Johnson and SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, violin
SSgt Sarah Hart, viola
SSgt Charlaine Prescott, cello
GySgt Eric Sabo, double bass
GySgt Robert Singer, conducting

The Fall Chamber Music Series will conclude Sunday, Oct. 30 at 2:00 P.M. in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, D.C. The program will include works by Glass, Wolpe, and Brahms.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Trio Sonata in G minor, TWV 42: g5

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

Georg Philipp Telemann was one of the most prolific composers of all time. He was largely self-taught, which makes his amount of musical productivity even more impressive. By the time he was ten, he had studied flute, violin, and keyboard, and that aided him in writing idiomatically for instruments. Although Telemann wrote more than 1,000 cantatas (in comparison Johann Sebastian Bach composed 224), his large output includes a great deal of chamber music. During his lifetime, there was a growing popularity for musicians to play together at home, hence the term “salon” music. Because he was self-taught, he felt a strong connection to these amateurs and pioneered the publication of work written and distributed specifically for them.

Essercizii Musici, or *Musical Exercises*, was published in 1739 and was presented with the intent of having music circulated within the general population. Education was a large part of Telemann’s life, but the content of the *Essercizii Musici* is not overtly instructional. Rather, it is quite similar to his *Tafelmusik*, as both include solos and trio for a variety of instrument combinations. The Trio in G minor is a beautiful work and shows off a lively bass line, something that was not the norm during this era. The Trio begins with its first movement marked Mesto (Sad), another departure from typical music of this period. The three movements that follow are labeled more in line with the tempo markings we have come to expect in Baroque music.

String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Opus 74, *Harp*

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

The summer of 1809 was an emotionally difficult time in Ludwig van Beethoven’s life. One of his musical idols, Joseph Haydn, had just died; Beethoven’s city of residence, Vienna, had just been invaded by Napoleon; and the love of his life had declined his marriage proposal. Beethoven shared this with his publishers: “Let me tell you that since May 4th I have produced very little coherent work, at most a fragment here and there. The whole course of events has in my case affected both body and soul.” Despite his recent artistic and financial success, he was worried about the changes and loss surrounding him, including the continual decline of his hearing.

Beethoven’s self-perception of unproductivity is ironic, considering he produced some of his most iconic works during this time. Known by musicologists as his “Middle Period,” this fruitful era was characterized by structurally challenging and emotional writing. This new frontier of self-expression for Beethoven produced his famous Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Opus 64; the celebrated Piano Concerto No. 5, Opus 73, (*The Emperor*); and String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Opus 74, heard on today’s program.

The quartet was given the nickname *Harp* by Beethoven’s publishers because of his use of thematic pizzicato in the first movement, traded back and forth between the members of the string quartet. The first movement’s rambunctious joy, occasionally interrupted with surprising chord changes and hints of darkness, culminates with a flashy arpeggiated solo for the first violinist as the rest of the quartet combines all of the thematic material Beethoven introduces throughout the movement as a lush accompaniment. The second movement is introspective and vulnerable; a conversation with the divine. His third movement, a scherzo, is simultaneously tempestuous and self-effacing, while the accompanying trio is triumphant, reminiscent of the trio from his Fifth Symphony. As the expression goes, “in like a lion, out like a lamb,” so goes the seamless transition between the third and fourth movements. Written as a surprisingly traditional set of theme and variations, the final movement brings back the joy and sentimentality of the first and second movements, and the composer gives each instrumental voice an opportunity to shine.

Beethoven completed the quartet quickly, and it was premièred in the autumn of 1809. It was the only quartet that was published with its own opus, which meant Beethoven and his publishers felt it was a significant individual work to earn such distinction. Indeed, his compositional style was almost unrecognizable to fans of his six Opus 18 quartets, and he would continue to expand his compositional and emotional boundaries within his future string quartet writing.

Siegfried Idyll

Richard Wagner (1813–83)

On the morning of December 25, 1870, thirteen musicians quietly assembled on the stairway of Tribschen, Richard Wagner’s home in Luzern, Switzerland. While this was Christmas morning, it was also the twenty-fifth birthday of Cosima Wagner, Richard’s wife. She gently awoke to the opening lines of *Siegfried Idyll*, Wagner’s birthday gift to her.

Her diary entry reads, “When I woke up I heard a sound, it grew ever louder, I could no longer imagine myself in a dream, music was sounding, and what music! After it had died away, Richard came in to me with the five children and put into my hands the score of his ‘symphonic birthday greeting.’ I was in tears, but so, too, was the whole household. Richard had set up his orchestra on the stairs and thus consecrated our Tribschen forever!”

Siegfried Idyll is a work of great tenderness, restraint, and intimacy, qualities not usually associated with the music of Richard Wagner. The main theme is sung by Brünnhilde in Act 3 of his opera *Siegfried* to the words “Ewig war ich” (I always was, I always am, always in sweet yearning bliss). It is his most personal composition, clearly showing his deep love for Cosima and their young family, as well as the joy in their domestic life at Tribschen.